

*Pres. McCarthy, Eugene
Pres. Mohr, Charles*

SAIGON TAKES REINS OF CIA'S SCHOOL

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. President, the New York Times of this morning publishes a somewhat serious and confused story about the CIA school in Saigon.

I find it rather difficult to understand just what happened. However, as nearly as I can understand, the school run by the CIA was infiltrated and taken over by a third force group which was conducting propaganda against the propaganda line being presented by the CIA.

I read a paragraph from the article:

The changeover of the training program took place in mid-June in a dramatic confrontation at the seaside city of Vungtau. It came after political instructors in the rural pacification training school there seized a supply of arms and threatened to resist a change in the leadership of the school.

It seems rather contradictory that a classification school group should seize the arms in order to take over the leadership of the school.

The article further states, quoting in this case a Vietnamese source:

"But we cannot have the cadre controlled by one political party," said one Vietnamese source. He added: "Also, there could never be success in this program as long as Americans seem to run it, and this is no criticism of the CIA. It has to be our program."

The final paragraph reads:

Actually, many employees of the agency remain in the training and field supervision program because there is no one to replace them. But informed sources said the agency was not happy to take a less prominent part in what has become the largest overt program in its history.

Since this is described as an overt program, I assume that information about it could probably be given to the Senate by those Members of the Senate whom the Senate last week decided could be trusted with the deep secrets of the CIA. I hope that the members of that committee will look into this matter and, if possible, satisfy themselves about it. If they see no danger in the security of the country, I hope they will inform the Senate as to the facts of this situation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article entitled "Saigon Takes Reins of CIA's School," written by Charles Mohr, and published in the New York Times of July 18, 1966, be printed at this point in the Record.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[From the New York (N.Y.) Times, July 18, 1966]

SAIGON TAKES REINS OF CIA'S SCHOOL

(By Charles Mohr)

SAIGON, SOUTH VIETNAM, July 17.—Large numbers of South Vietnamese who had been hired to preach support of the Saigon Government were secretly indoctrinated to believe the Government was unworthy of support, it was disclosed today by South Vietnamese sources.

As a result, Saigon Government officials have taken control from the Central Intelligence Agency of the program for training the "revolutionary development cadre"—armed experts in political propaganda.

The anti-Government indoctrination was conducted by a South Vietnamese army major, employed by the C.I.A., who spread the doctrine of a highly nationalistic political society of the Dai Viet political party. The doctrine was neither pro-Communist nor did it subscribe to salvation through the present Government.

South Vietnamese sources consider this to be a third-force doctrine that waits only for a propitious moment to seize power.

The major, Le Xuan Mai, is believed to have infiltrated a considerable part of South Vietnam's propaganda and pacification teams with cells of workers indoctrinated in this third-force philosophy.

The changeover of the training program took place in mid-June in a dramatic confrontation at the seaside city of Vungtau. It came after political instructors in the rural-pacification training school there seized a supply of arms and threatened to resist a change in the leadership of the school.

In the end, the "struggle force" formed by the instructors bowed without violence to the wishes of the Saigon Government.

TAKEOVER FROM C.I.A.

The most important result of the affair appears to be that the South Vietnamese officials have taken from the hands of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, which financed and controlled the program, primary responsibility for the training of members of a rural pacification cadre.

United States officials do not appear to have consciously fostered the kind of political indoctrination of the cadre that Maj. Gen. Nguyen Duc Thang, Minister of Revolutionary Development, found offensive or dangerous.

The training program and secret indoctrination had been devised by Major Mai, Vietnamese sources said.

Major Mai has been dismissed as director of the Vungtau training center, along with two captains and about five political instructors. Other instructors may be dismissed in the future.

An important South Vietnamese official said today, "I will work with anybody and I will take support from any American group, but we must have control of this program."

HOW PROBLEM DEVELOPED

As pieced together from various informants, this is the story:

Other United States and South Vietnamese agencies could not foresee or appreciate the necessity for armed propaganda teams to combat similar Vietcong organizations. But the C.I.A. did grasp this need. By the end of 1965, the agency had trained about 19,000 members of Political Action Teams.

Although their effectiveness may have been exaggerated, the teams were impressively effective in some areas. When a new rural pacification program was evolved late last year by South Vietnamese and United States officials, both the existing Political Action Teams and their training center at Vungtau were visualized as the core of the new program.

General Thang was appointed Minister of Revolutionary Development, or pacification. He in turn appointed Col. Tran Ngoc Chau, a respected thinker on guerrilla warfare, as director of cadre.

According to some South Vietnamese sources, it came to the attention of these officials that Major Mai was a member of something called the Duy Tan sect of the Dai Viet or Greater Vietnam political party.

As interpreted by Major Mai, the doctrine of this political society was that neither Communism nor the present Government

governments in Saigon offered salvation to the Vietnamese people.

THIRD-FORCE PHILOSOPHY

He is thus accused of having taught a third-force philosophy at Vungtau, centered on the idea that members of a political action team should appear to support the Government but wait for the right moment when it could be replaced with a more idealistic movement.

There may have been a certain anti-American tone to this indoctrination, but it was neither pro-Vietcong nor corrupt, observers concede.

According to unverifiable reports, Major Mai and his assistants may have placed four-man Duy Tan cells in each Political Action Team platoon graduated from Vungtau and in each 59-man rural pacification team graduated from the first class of 4,500 such workers. This is in addition to open training and spare-time indoctrination of all other members in aspects of the sect's philosophy.

LINK TO PARTY REPORTED

Major Mai, the sources said, also built subtly for the future. He conceived an emblem for the Political Action Teams built around the letter "T" superimposed on the letter "H," which ostensibly represented a Vietnamese slogan meaning "Service Through Sacrifice."

But the "T-H" symbol is also that of the Duy Tan sect of the Dai Viet party.

General Thang moved cautiously at first but in mid-June, after the first class of the pacification cadre had been graduated and before the second enrolled, General Thang sent Colonel Chau to be commandant of the camp over Major Mai.

Different versions of the events that followed can be heard. The versions generously agree that Major Mai's subordinates formed a "struggle" group to demand that Colonel Chau return to Saigon and that the camp be left undisturbed. They also agree that political instructors seized some arms.

C.I.A. officials urged a compromise under which Major Mai would have been retained in a job at Vungtau. But when this proved unacceptable to General Thang, the agency agreed to the change and to an assumption of much greater South Vietnamese control of the whole program.

It should not be thought that Major Mai succeeded in turning all of his cadre into members of his political party. Many were already under strong political influence from other groups in their home provinces. It is difficult, in fact, to assess accurately just how much effect the indoctrination had.

"But we cannot have the cadre controlled by one political party," said one Vietnamese source. He added: "Also, there could never be success in this program as long as Americans seem to run it, and this is no criticism of the C.I.A. It has to be our program."

Actually, many employees of the agency remain in the training and field supervision program because there is no one to replace them. But informed sources said the agency was not unhappy to take a less prominent part in what has become the largest overt program in its history.